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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

September 17, 1982

National Security Decision  
Directive 57

UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARDS THE HORN OF AFRICA (X)

The Horn of Africa is important to the United States primarily because of its strategic location with respect to the Persian Gulf/Southwest Asia region. The objectives of U.S. strategy toward the Horn are:

- To gain and consolidate U.S. military access to regional facilities;
- To deter and counter attacks or destabilization efforts against friendly states;
- To improve the economic health and internal political security of friendly states;
- To work for the resolution of local conflicts; and
- To reduce and ultimately remove Soviet and Soviet-proxy presence and influence. (X)

In order to achieve these objectives, the U.S. shall pursue a comprehensive and coordinated strategy towards the countries and issues in this region. This strategy shall consist of the following specific elements:

With respect to Somalia:

- To consolidate our military access to Somali facilities by completing currently planned military construction projects.
- To enhance Somalia's ability to deter limited Ethiopian air and ground incursions and to enable Somalia to defend itself against Ethiopian/Libyan supported guerrilla attacks. This will require within the overall budget levels giving greater priority to security assistance for Somalia.
- To enhance deterrence of aggression against Somalia with other direct actions including a gradual increase in the frequency and level of military exercises in Somalia, avoiding direct involvement or commitment of U.S. combat forces in insurgencies or minor border conflicts.

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-- In the event of a full-scale invasion of Somalia, the U.S. may face the alternatives of permitting Somalia to fall or direct commitment of U.S. forces. For planning purposes, commitment of U.S. forces to defend Somalia will not be precluded.

-- In discussions with the Somalis, the security assurances given in conjunction with the 1980 access agreement are not to be exceeded; our security assistance to Somalia and other aspects of our bilateral relationship are to continue to be tailored to reduce Somali irredentist ambitions.

-- To use our assistance to Somalia as leverage to encourage Somali economic policy and political reforms in order to improve long-term prospects for economic and political security.

-- Our assistance is to support the government of Somalia as a whole and not exclusively the current leadership, in order to maximize our continuing influence as the political situation evolves. (X)

With respect to Sudan:

-- To continue the high priority now accorded to security and economic assistance for Sudan in order to enable it to defend against subversion from Libya and confront critical underlying economic problems.

-- To enhance military cooperation with Sudan, including military exercises and pursuit of a military access agreement.

-- To encourage Sudan to rely primarily on Egypt for direct support if needed in facing guerrilla and/or cross-border threats from Ethiopia and Libya; to assist by appropriate direct U.S. actions including military visits and exercises but avoid commitment of U.S. forces in insurgencies or minor border conflicts.

-- To discourage direct Sudanese cross-border actions against Ethiopia which might have the effect of escalating conflict and weakening Sudan's diplomatic position.

-- In the unlikely event of a full-scale Ethiopian/Libyan invasion of Sudan, the U.S. may face requests from Sudan and/or Egypt for direct assistance and combat support. For planning purposes, commitment of U.S. forces to defend Sudan will not be precluded.

-- To strongly encourage continued Sudanese economic reform and austerity measures with the objective of returning Sudan to a situation of economic solvency within a five year period. An interagency working group is directed urgently to

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develop creative proposals for meeting Sudan's needs for the extended debt relief and increased capital inflows essential to the achievement of this objective.

-- Our assistance is to support the government of Sudan as a whole and not exclusively the current leadership, in order to maximize our continuing influence as the political situation evolves. (X)

With respect to Djibouti:

-- To accord sufficient priority in the budget process to increasing assistance flows to Djibouti in recognition of the major importance of Djibouti to our naval and air operations in the region.

-- To encourage the French to continue their primary role as supporters of Djibouti's security and economy. (X)

With respect to Kenya:

-- To maintain our broadly cooperative relationship with Kenya, including military activities, upgrading of Kenyan facilities and our security and economic assistance.

-- To work to reduce Kenyan sensitivity to our increased military supply and cooperation with Somalia by maintaining rising assistance levels, if possible within overall budget constraints, and by encouraging consolidation of Kenyan-Somali rapprochement.

-- To strongly encourage sound economic policies. (X)

With respect to Ethiopia:

-- To put the Ethiopian leadership on notice that Ethiopia's actions against Somalia and Sudan have crossed the line of conduct acceptable to the United States.

-- To take appropriate steps to bring pressure on Ethiopia to discourage Ethiopian-Libyan destabilizing activities as well as continuing Ethiopian-Soviet collaboration. Actions will include coordination of economic measures (including bilateral and multilateral assistance policies) with our European allies and parallel consultations with major friendly regional states including particularly Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The Interagency Group is to conduct periodic reviews of the progress of this action program.

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-- To seek to maintain our presence in Addis Ababa in recognition of its importance for intelligence-gathering on short-term Ethiopian/Libyan threats to our interests in the region and our long-term interest in restoring a position of U.S. influence in Ethiopia. (X)

With respect to the Ogaden dispute:

-- To continue to advocate a negotiated settlement to this dispute and seek openings for efforts at mediation.

-- To do nothing that would stimulate a resurgence of the Somali-supported insurgency in the Ogaden. (X)

With respect to the Eritrea conflict:

-- The U.S. has no current interest in an Eritrean settlement.

-- To avoid identification with the Eritrean insurgents, but continue to consult closely with Sudan and other friendly states (e.g. Saudi Arabia) in order to monitor the evolving status of this conflict. (X)

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